

unfamiliar environment—and some of them were described as 'very loud'—why did no one else hear them?

6. Lastly, if the noises described were due to the misinterpretation of ordinary noises, why should D., on 30th July, have heard any noise *at all* from the dredger? It was not working at the time so there was no noise from it to misinterpret (p. 63).

In conclusion, I would add that the Report of the Investigators put forward no theory of the cause of the phenomena, and the door is still wide open for a satisfactory explanation. So many difficulties beset Mr Hastings' solution of the problem that I, personally, find it unsatisfactory.

## REVIEW OF PERIODICAL LITERATURE 1968

### I. *American*

by JOHN BELOFF

IN the course of reviewing a new book on the little known Jewish-German philosopher Solomon Maimon, a contemporary of Kant's, Dr Robert Francoeur (*I.J.P.*, No. 2, p. 206) mentions that one claim he has on our attention is that he founded a journal devoted specifically to the objective study of paranormal phenomena. After ten annual issues, however, the editors decided to cease publication on the grounds that: 'the accumulation of evidence of parapsychological phenomena was sufficiently exhaustive to make publication pointless.' I think I can safely say that none of the journals that I am about to review stand in any danger of redundancy due to a surfeit of evidence!

All the same, real progress has been recorded on a number of fronts as I shall endeavour to show. The most important contributions this year from America are to be found in the *Journal of the American S.P.R.* (J.A.S.P.R.) and its companion *Proceedings* (P.A.S.P.R.). If this were an occasion for the handing out of Oscars I would not hesitate to present my first Oscar for the most substantial series of experiments to be published during 1968 to Dr J. G. Pratt. The relentless pursuit of the 'focusing effect' in

the scoring patterns of the now celebrated Pavel Stepanek (P.S.) which Dr Pratt and his various collaborators have conducted both in Prague and at the University of Virginia can here be followed in successive instalments in the *J.A.S.P.R.* (one in No. 1, two in No. 2, one in No. 3 and one in No. 4). But happily this work has already received one fitting accolade in the shape of an acceptance by the editor of *NATURE* where a brief account of one aspect of this investigation has appeared in the issue of October 5th.

Of all the outstanding subjects in the history of parapsychology P.A. is, at once, the narrowest but also the most enduring of his kind. Since he was first discovered by Dr Milan Rýzl in 1961 he has easily outstripped all rivals in the sheer number of guesses that he has registered and there are no signs as yet that he is exhausted. To the best of my knowledge he is the only individual still regularly producing non-random scores anywhere in the world. And yet his limitations are no less surprising. So far he has succeeded on only one very specific task, namely that of guessing whether the green or white side of a two-colour card is uppermost when this is presented to him inside an opaque envelope. And this task, unfortunately, is not by any means ideal from a parapsychological point of view inasmuch as P.S. has to touch the packets inside which the target-card lies concealed. This has inevitably led to speculation that the natural warp of the card might communicate itself to the subject through the layers that surround it. Yet we are assured by Blom and Pratt (*J.A.S.P.R.*, No. 1) that they took the precaution of flexing all cards before use in the opposite direction from that of its natural warp and have demonstrated that these 'flattened' cards do not resume their initial warp, at any rate for the duration of the investigation. In any case, as they point out, the tensile strength of the cardboard envelope is many times greater than that of the thin target card inside it.

Quite early on in the investigation of P.S. it was observed that, for no apparent reason, he tended to score higher on certain cards than on others. This was the start of the focusing effect which became such a striking feature of his performance. From the cards this tended to spread to the envelopes in which the card was presented with the result that P.S. would tend to call in a consistent way whenever a particular envelope came up irrespective of the actual positioning of the target card. Since the envelopes were themselves presented inside covers there could be no question of P.S. identifying a particular envelope by any ordinary means. Later still the focusing effect spread to the covers when these were presented inside outer-jackets and there were even

signs that he was beginning to focus on certain outer-jackets although to pursue this one would have had to use outer-outer-jackets! This focusing effect is something quite new in parapsychology and the attempt to make sense of it will undoubtedly have important repercussions for our understanding of the mysterious psi-process. Fortunately the work on P.S. is still continuing and, as I write these words, P.S. is, or should be, en route for Virginia.

Having thus disposed of my first Oscar, my second, I think, would have to be shared by Dr Karlis Osis and Dr Malcolm Turner, a statistician, for the best single experiment of the year which is described at some length in the *P.A.S.P.R.* for September. Dr Osis' earlier researches led him to question the widely held view that ESP is independent of distance. In fact, basing themselves on a survey of all the relevant experiments they could find in the English literature, Osis and Turner came to the provisional conclusion that ESP scoring does tend to decline with distance but that, instead of obeying the familiar inverse square law, it follows something more like an inverse  $2/5$ ths law so that the decline is very much less steep. However, it was difficult to draw any firm conclusions from the existing evidence on long-distance ESP because in these experiments the subjects knew the location of the target stimuli with the result that physical and psychological variables were inextricably confounded. The beauty of the present experiment is that subjects were ignorant of which particular location was being used on a given run. Instead mental contact with the agent was promoted by the expedient of getting the subject to look at photographs or hold token-objects pertaining to the agent. Three different locations were used: New York, Los Angeles and Tasmania. The subjects were 54 persons living at various places in the United States, half of them selected as being positive scorers on the basis of a previous test and half of them selected in the same way as being negative scorers.

Results, as usual, were messy and equivocal. Direct hits were at chance level for all three locations but for New York the overall displaced hits in the forward direction yielded a *CR* of  $+2.78$  while the overall displaced hits in the backward direction yielded a *CR* of  $-2.81$ . For Los Angeles only the forward displaced hits were significant, *CR* =  $+2.13$ , while Tasmania yielded no significant results on any count. An analysis failed to confirm the inverse  $2/5$ ths law but there was a weak decline-effect for the forward displacement hits of an approximately linear function which amounted to a mere  $0.0436$  of a hit per run for every one thousand miles of separation! In addition to the distance variable

no less than 25 other variables mostly of a psychological nature, were taken account of by the experimental design which used a stepwise multiple regression analysis and several of these variables appeared to have a bearing on the observed scoring patterns. The authors conclude on a somewhat subdued and uncertain note: there may be no universal inverse law in this domain, they suggest, but instead a complex interaction of physical and psychological variables that would vary from one individual to the next.

Now that Ted Serios is reported to have gone out of production with little likelihood that he will ever resume 1968 may go down in the annals of parapsychology as the last year in which any fresh information was forthcoming on what has surely been one of the most fantastic episodes of its whole history. Once again we have been painfully reminded that despite all the technical resources available to us at the present time it is the human material that circumscribes what can and cannot be attempted so that in effect we are just as helpless now as we were in the days of Eusapia Palladino or D. D. Home. Dr Jule Eisenbud has been severely criticised in some quarters for his handling of the Serios case but one cannot help wondering whether these critics would ever have got as far as mishandling this wayward subject. And when one learns that all this while Eisenbud has had Ted living with him in his own home one can only marvel at such fortitude and forbearance. Since Fukurai's work in Japan some fifty years ago no important claims for psychic photography had been made until Serios came along and if Eisenbud had done anything to antagonize his subject we might well have had to wait another fifty years for the next opportunity.

There are two articles on the Serios phenomenon this year both in the *J.A.S.P.R.*, one by Jule Eisenbud and Associates in No. 3, the other by Ian Stevenson and J. G. Pratt in No. 2. In the experiments described by Eisenbud an attempt was made to see whether Ted could shoot a picture through lead-impregnated glass that is impervious to X-rays. His successful shots are illustrated and discussed. The Stevenson-Pratt investigation carried out at the University of Virginia has a special importance in being the only investigation since Eisenbud took charge of the case in which Eisenbud himself did not participate in any capacity. A number of intriguing pictures of presumptively paranormal origin were obtained some of which had a recognisable connexion with Monticello, the home of Thomas Jefferson in the locality which Ted had been duly taken to visit. Unfortunately Ted left Virginia before completing the full series of experiments that had been planned for him which the authors hoped would settle once

and for all the vexed problem of authenticity. But whatever may be our personal opinions on this controversial question it is worth noting that the only half-reasonable suggestion that anyone has yet come forward with of a possible normal *modus operandi* is one that depends upon the use of a special sort of micro-lens conjoined to a microphotograph whereby an image can be projected onto the polaroid film when the shutter is open. Dr W. Rushton F.R.S. has, in my presence, produced a very plausible Serios-type picture of King's College Chapel by this method. The point to note, however, is that there is evidence that Serios has produced pictures at some distance from the camera whereas this system works only if the gadget is held in virtual proximity to the lens. In my view Ted's notorious 'gismo' would make it harder rather than easier for him to adopt this trick. But some doubt will always remain. Only one person in the world knows for certain whether or not Ted is a fraud and that is Ted himself and he, no doubt, will take his secret with him to the grave.

Although there is nothing else that quite matches the drama of the Serios affair in the pages of the *J.A.S.P.R.* this year, there is no lack of articles that are worth reading. The Maimonides team are here represented by an article by Dr Stanley Krippner on 'Experimentally Induced Telepathic Effects in Hypnosis and Non-Hypnosis Groups' (No. 4). This was the first time that the Maimonides Dream Laboratory had applied a technique that did not involve monitoring the subject's sleep but depended instead on the use of hypnotic suggestions to get the subject to dream about the target. Unfortunately, although there were some significant findings, the general results were too inconclusive to enable us to say how effective this technique is likely to be. If it could be developed it would make possible a much wider application of what Dr Ullman has called the 'nocturnal approach to psi' which at presents demands the costly and time-consuming appurtenances of a sleep-laboratory. For those interested in the methodology of mediumship, hauntings and poltergeists there are a number of articles in these issues that take these time-honoured topics to new levels of sophistication.

I come now to the *Journal of Parapsychology* (J.P.)\*<sup>1</sup>. The journal is notable this year for two very lengthy addresses by Dr Rhine himself. The first (No. 2) is entitled 'Psi and Psychology: Conflict and Resolution' and was originally an invited address to the American Psychological Association for their annual con-

<sup>1</sup> No 4 of this volume had not been received at the time when this review was written.

vention of September 1967. The second he has called simply 'Some Guiding Concepts for Parapsychology'. This was designed for local consumption and was delivered to a Spring Review Meeting of the F.R.N.M. in May 1968. It marked the retirement of Dr Rhine from the directorship of that institute. Both papers can be read as, in a sense, the parting words of wisdom of the father-figure of modern parapsychology as he prepares to make way for his successors. As such they are of absorbing interest expressing as they do both his *credo* and his *apologia pro vita sua*. And yet I must confess I found them sadly defeatist. In the first of these talks Dr Rhine recalls the extraordinary impact which his work during the '30s made on contemporary psychologists, so much so that even confirmed behaviourists like Karl Lashley confessed to having once sat up all night guessing at cards and polls carried out among psychologists revealed a markedly positive attitude towards the new science. But then, for whatever reason, interest evaporated and today the two fields are as far apart as ever. 'As an obvious matter of history' Dr Rhine points out 'parapsychology is still today, with regard to academic psychology in America, essentially where it was in 1892.' What is less obvious to his readers is why Dr Rhine should now acquiesce in this state of affairs when it represents, surely, the collapse of everything that he has striven for.

The answer to this puzzle, I suggest, lies in Dr Rhine's persistent refusal to admit the necessity of a reproduceable experiment. There are certainly a great many different reasons that we can all think of as to why official science should be reluctant to recognize parapsychology but the point to note is that only one of these reasons is important, namely that, as Rhine admits, we are not yet in a position to tell a would-be researcher in our field what he has got to do to get positive results. If this one objective could be achieved then, no matter how modest the psi-effect in question, the ice-ages of parapsychology would have come to an end and almost overnight we would become an intense focus of scientific interest and activity. One might therefore have thought that Dr Rhine's parting message to us all would be to strain every sinew of our body to bring about this desired consummation. But not at all, he abjures us, on the contrary, to cling hard to such gains as we have already made and not to bother whether the world recognizes us or not. Indeed, in his second talk he goes so far as to suggest that the demand for a repeatable experiment merely betrays an ignorance of the nature of psi or at least 'what can be claimed for it at this stage'.

Now it may well be the case that paranormal phenomena depend

on such a unique conjunction of circumstances that repeatability must forever be beyond our reach. Indeed, the persistent failure to find a repeatable experiment is itself a powerful inductive argument in favour of Dr Rhine's point of view. What makes it ironical in his case however is that his entire approach and methodology seems specifically designed to achieve reproducibility. How else can one justify the total sacrifice of the rich qualitative aspects of psi that is entailed in the ordinary card-guessing test? And if one then turns to almost any of the empirical articles published in this volume they all seem to cry out for replication (an exception would be the PK article by McConnell & Forwald in No. 1 where success depends upon having a certain unique individual as your subject, i.e. Forwald himself). Take, for example, that astonishing paper in No. 3 entitled 'ESP Experiments with Mice' by Duval & Montredon (pseudonyms for, presumably, Remy Chauvin & Jean Mayer, but why are our French Colleagues so bashful?). Their results, when analysed by what they plausibly argue is the most appropriate method of analysis, are significant at the 0.1% level and the beauty of this experiment is that it was from first to last fully automated. Assuming then that their findings were not just a lucky accident (and they have since reported an even more successful sequel at the annual convention of the Parapsychological Association at Freiburg in Sept. 1968) why should such an experiment not be repeatable? We can hardly suppose that the particular four mice that they picked for this experiment happened to be the Hubert Pearces and Basil Shackletons of the rodent world! Perhaps we have been too long preoccupied with human beings and that the time has come to take a leaf out of the behaviourist's book and turn to humbler species.

Another promising paper is the one by Thelma Moss and J. A. Gengerelli entitled 'ESP Effects Generated by Affective States' (No. 2). It is encouraging in the first place to find a well known psychologist like Gengerelli associating himself with a parapsychological research. In the second place this article is the sequel of one that had already appeared in the *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, an A.P.A. journal that does not usually publish parapsychological findings. 72 agent-subject pairs were tested in this experiment using a set-up specially designed to enhance telepathic transmission. The 72 subjects were divided for purposes of analysis into three equal groups according to whether, on a previous questionnaire the subject had shown himself to be what I call a 'Super-Sheep' (i.e. one who not only believes in ESP but believes that he has it), a 'Sheep' or a 'Goat'. Results for

the 24 Super-Sheep were positive at the 0.5% level of significance but the other two groups did not give significant results. However, an admittedly post-facto regrouping of the teams according to whether at least one member of the team was a practising artist showed that the 'artist group' alone gave positive results with  $p = 5 \times 10^{-6}$ .

I come finally to the *International Journal of Parapsychology* (I.J.P.)\*<sup>1</sup>. This journal tends to go in more for commentary than for experimental reports but both are to be found there. One empirical study that is of considerable psychological interest although, unfortunately, its implications for parapsychology are not developed by the author, is Dr Bernard Aaronson's 'Hypnotic Alterations of Space and Time'. Another hypnosis study which is a lot less scientific but does at least directly involve ESP is Lee Edward Levinson's 'Hypnosis: the Key to Unlocking Latent Psi Faculties' (No. 2). Mr Levinson is a journalist who appears to have had some success with deep trance subjects on the strength of which he revives the perennial belief in hypnotism as the royal road to ESP. Unfortunately his account is so sketchy that it is impossible to evaluate his evidence. Both with regard to the extravagance of his claims and with regard to the sloppiness of his methods he strikes one as a survival from the 19th century. Yet, for all we know, he may well have a flair that some of us professionals have lost and if only he could get together with some rigorous parapsychologist he might really get things moving.

Of the discussion articles the one by Dr Milan Rýzl, now resident in the United States, on 'Parapsychology in Communist Countries of Europe' is of particular interest. Dr Rýzl who last visited the Soviet Union in June 1967 probably knows more about parapsychology in Eastern Europe than anyone else, at least anyone who is in a position to talk freely about it. It is all the more disappointing therefore that his account tells us so little about what the Russians have actually achieved as distinct from what they are hoping to achieve. Whether this is to be taken as implying that they have had very little success and that there has been more talk than action or whether, being Russians, they are just very secretive about what they have done, we are left to surmise.

Those who relish controversy will want to turn to Trevor Hall's 'The Strange Case of Edmund Gurney: Some Comments on Mr Fraser Nicol's Review' (No. 2). Readers of the *I.J.P.* will no doubt recall Mr Nicol's devastating attack on Mr Hall's book

<sup>1</sup> No. 4 of this volume had not been received at the time when this review was written.



in this journal (1966, No. 1) and will be curious to see how the author defends himself. To me, at any rate, it seems that Mr Hall has evaded the crux of Nicol's charge, namely his exposure of the inconsistencies in Blackburn's confession. The best that Hall can manage is to insist that when Blackburn made his confession he was no longer quite the same scallywag as he was in his youth at the time when he and Smith were supposed to have hoaxed the S.P.R. with their telepathic act. Otherwise Mr Hall deals mainly with details. It is an editorial custom for the reviewer rather than the author to be allowed the last word. It is a pity that here the custom has had to be honoured in the breach rather than the observance. But Mr Nicol's fans can hardly imagine that he will allow the last word to go to that notorious foe of parapsychology and will look forward to see him ride again, even if this will not be through the pages of the I.J.P.

## II. *Continental*

by G. ZORAB

### THE NETHERLANDS

Zorab, G., 'Is het menselijk paranormaal vermogen een evolutief of een involutief proces?' (Are the human paranormal powers subject to a process of evolution or of involution?) *Spiegel der Parapsychologie*, 7, 1967, part 1-2, pp. 11-22.

Optimistic 19th century England (Myers) thought the paranormal faculties as still very much in their cradle, and that later generations would show an ever increasing development of these powers. This may be considered the progressive hypothesis. Guided by Haeckel's biogenetic law which they also applied to mental faculties and phenomena, several psychologists and psychoanalysts of the first decades of this century, on the other hand, claimed that the paranormal was of an atavistic nature. And that the farther back one recedes in the history of the human species, the more often and the more generally the paranormal would be met with. The supporters of this retrogressive or involuntary hypothesis came to the conclusion that this was the reason why we meet with far more paranormal phenomena among children and the primitive races than among the adults of modern cultured peoples.

The author, however, believes that neither hypothesis is sufficiently supported by the facts to be of any value. Both